



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 13

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 530 SOUTH KING STREET ROOM 400 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96813
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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING JUNE 1, 2006 PAUAHI RECREATION CENTER

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Matusow at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alvin Au, Richard Brawley, Lynne Matusow, Carl Middleton, Dolores Mollring, Karl Rhoads, Tom Smyth, Burton White, Stanford Yuen.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

GUESTS: Daniel Constanacio, Les Chinen (Queens Medical Center), Keith Kurahashi (Kusao and Kurahashi), Fire Fighter 3 Kenny Tenn (HFD-Central Station), Sgt. N. Colburn, Lt. O. Harada, Officer N. Chung (HPD), Jessica McDunn (Hawaii Pacific University), Frank Lavoie, Virginia Young, Gary Omori and Pat Lee (Honolulu High Capacity Transit Corridor Project), Bill Brennan (Mayor's Office), Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Al Canopin (Councilmember Rod Tam's Office), Laverne S., Dean Chu (Neighborhood Commission Office staff).

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS: The Board members introduced themselves at this time.

REPORTS AND CONCERNS:

HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT – Fire Fighter 3 Tenn reported the following:

1. Last month the station responded to 11 structure, 10 rubbish and 1 vehicle fire, 75 medical emergencies, 4 search and rescue and 11 miscellaneous calls. There were no major incidents. The rubbish fires appear to have been deliberately set.
2. Fire Safety Tip: Brush fires cause great damage in our communities and use resources that could be better utilized elsewhere. Be responsible and dispose of all fires properly. Even small sources of fire, such as cigarettes and charcoal, can cause immense destruction. Work together with your community to make it safer. Make and maintain a 30-foot wide fire-break by clearing vegetation surrounding all structures. Report and remove hazards. Communicate with each other. Formulate plans for yourself, your family, and your neighborhood in case of emergencies.
3. With Independence Day around the corner, consider leaving fireworks to the professionals and enjoy one of the many fireworks displays around town. If you use fireworks, follow all warnings and instructions. Young children should never be given fireworks. Older children should only use fireworks under the direct supervision of an adult. Have a happy and safe Independence Day.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. It was noted that some plastic newspaper racks have been set on fire.
2. The legislature passed, but the Governor has not yet signed, bills relating to arson, into law.
3. Free blood pressure tests continue to be available at the station. Young noted problems with gaining entry into the station, Tenn provided some tips on getting in through the back entrance.

Fire Fighter Tenn was thanked for attending the meeting.

Yuen arrived during the HFD presentation portion of the meeting.



HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT – Officer Chung reported the following:

1. In April there were 4 robberies, 5 burglaries, 33 unauthorized entries into motor vehicles, 8 auto thefts, 3 aggravated assaults, 30 simple assaults, 131 motor vehicle collisions, 16 DUI, 1 sex assault, 10 family offenses, 22 drug offenses, 8 graffiti incidents.
2. The Click It or Ticket campaign on seatbelt use will run another week.
3. One of the security cameras was not working today, repair was requested. The camera control equipment in the sub-station sometimes does not work properly but is working now.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. No statistics were available at this time about citations given for urination law violations.
2. The fine for a seatbelt violation is \$92.
3. Homeless persons are putting shopping carts on the Smith-Beretania Park ball courts in the early evenings, and also entering the park after hours to sleep. Follow up will be done and the park is monitored.
4. Work is done with the Liquor Commission on liquor law violations; there will be a check of all bars in the area. One new club is serving kava, which is not recognized as a liquor. It was noted that kava can cause impairment, such as when driving, but not all officers are trained to identify this type of impairment.
5. The shift from the 3-day 12-hour shift schedule to a 5-day 9-hour shift schedule is planned to occur in a month.

CITIZENS PATROL – Mollring reported there was a recent walk with Weed and Seed program representatives, HPD, and other **citizen's** patrols. One patrol found gambling activity.

HAWAII PACIFIC UNIVERSITY – McDunn reported the following:

1. Summer sessions in progress or schedule include: May 15 – June 30, June 5 – August 23, June 13 – July 28, July 3 – August 23.
2. On May 17 HPU graduated its largest class ever, 750 students, including 100 nursing students, the nursing program's largest graduating class ever.
3. For upcoming call 543-8034 for [more] information.
4. There was a bomb threat in April which turned out to be a crank call.
5. The crosswalk signal light at Ft. Street Mall and Beretania Street, no longer automatically cycles to a walk signal unless the button is pushed. Similar malfunctions were reported for crosswalks at Alakea and Queen streets, and Kukui and Maunakea streets, Brennan, representing the Mayor's Office, will follow up.

HONOLULU CULTURE AND ARTS DISTRICT – No representative was present. Smyth reported the current edition of the Downtown Planet included an article about Ed Korybski, Executive Director, Honolulu Culture and Arts District. There was also an announcement of the federal Preserve America Neighborhood designation for Chinatown at a reception last month. Brennan noted that this was not an official announcement, just a notification that the designation had been awarded to Chinatown. A formal announcement is coming.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS:

MAYOR'S OFFICE – Brennan reported the following:

1. Regarding a question from last month's meeting about too bright street lights on Kekaulike Mall, the Department of Facility Maintenance is working with the manufacturer to determine if some type of shielding is possible.
2. Regarding a question from last month's meeting about a large pothole at Nuuanu Avenue and Beretania Street, patching of potholes and road resurfacing projects is being delayed due to the shortage of asphalt to make patching material. Potholes should continue to be reported, repairs will be made when asphalt becomes available.
3. The Mayor's Chinatown Summit is scheduled for June 22, Hawaii Theatre.
4. There will be a dedication of the Pele Street Park on June 21. Chair Matusow thanked the Mayor, Rhoads and others for their work on this project.
5. There is no new information on the development of public restrooms in the Downtown/Chintown area.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. No replacement members have been named to the Police Commission.
2. The crosswalk across Bishop Street at Adams Lane was questioned. Brennan will follow up on why the crosswalk was placed in this location. Smyth noted prior to Hotel Street being converted to City buses only, Adams Lane was used as a shortcut by drivers creating a safety hazard.
3. Regarding addressing homeless issues, the City is deferring to the State to handle this issue as it has the resources including applicable agencies and personnel that the City does not. The City can assist in the development of affordable housing.

Brennan was thanked for attending the meeting.

SENATOR SUZANNE CHUN OAKLAND – Senator Chun Oakland distributed copies of the list of bills and resolutions that passed this session of the legislature, and reported some bills of interest passed included: a) addressing identity theft, b) funding for repair and maintenance of schools, c) early childhood education, d) elder services, and f) gas cap repeal, but retaining monitoring of prices.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. Regarding the gas cap, it was noted that prices in Hawaii are directly affected by local refiners purchasing of petroleum in 30 – 60 days supplies, where mainland cities buy refined gasoline as needed from refiners.
2. Thanks were expressed for her support of the bill that updated the standard of need for welfare payments, related to setting the poverty level, which had previously been set at the 1993 level and is now changed to the 2006 level.

Senator Chun Oakland was thanked for attending the meeting.

COUNCILMEMBER ROD TAM – Al Canopin, from Councilmember Tam's Office, reported the following:

1. There will be a dedication ceremony for the Pele Street Park, June 21, invitations will be sent to involved parties. Follow up will be done to provide Brennan with names of guests to be invited. The City Council would have to approve a name change for the park to honor Ceasar and Eleanor Gomes, former owners of the property.

2. Implementation of hours to close Kekaulike Mall at night has been delayed as the Mall is still designated as a street and not a park and park closing procedures do not apply.
3. There is no new information about the development of public restrooms in the Downtown/Chinatown area. Canopin will keep the Board updated.

Canopin was thanked for attending the meeting.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

CARS ON HOTEL STREET BUS MALL – A resident reported seeing cars on the Ft. Street Mall bus mall and suggested that additional signs are needed on cross streets, such as between Maukanea and Bethel streets, to notify drivers; and that some drivers when trying to pass buses are creating a hazard for pedestrians crossing the street who are hidden by stopped buses.

ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS - In response to a question about a veteran living in the Downtown area needing financial assistance, Smyth suggested calling Tripler Medical Center's Veterans Service Officer, and Senator Chun Oakland suggested a link via the State's web site to the State Office of Veteran's Services.

HONOLULU HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECT - Omori reported there will be a public meeting, June 26, Mission Memorial Auditorium, City Hall Annex, 5:30 p.m. Chair Matusow reported only Board members on the Transportation Special Investigation Committee may attend on behalf of the Board due to Sunshine law restrictions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

UPDATE ON ALOHA TOWER PROJECT – Deferred to the July meeting.

At this time Chair Matusow asked that the agenda be modified to combine Unfinished and New Business items for Queens Medical Center. There were no objections.

QUEENS MEDICAL CENTER ZONE CHANGE AND LAND USE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS FROM A-2 MEDIUM DENSITY APARTMENT TO B-2 COMMUNITY BUSINESS DISTRICT, INCREASING THE HEIGHT LIMIT FOR A PORTION OF THE MEDICAL CENTER FROM 100 TO 150 FEET, DECREASE THE OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT, PROTECTION FOR LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS, HEIGHT CHANGE FOR THE MILLER STREET TRIANGLE; QUEENS MEDICAL CENTER NEW PLAN REVIEW USE COVERING PHYSICIANS OFFICE BUILDING 3, CANCER CENTER BUILDING, OFFICE SPACE, AND LAUHALA STREET GARAGE – Keith Kurahashi, from Kusao and Kurahashi, consultant, provided a brief background on Queens Medical Center, beginning with its establishment in 1858, and presence on its present site since 1859, with no major improvements since 1985. Improvements are needed to serve the needs of an aging community, provide more parking, and improve its services.

The zone change, amendments to Land Use Ordinance, and a Plan Review Use, are being sought to cover future developments for the entire medical center at one time rather than individually. Plans for improvements require the zone change, increasing the height for specific new buildings from 100 to 130 feet, decreasing the height limit for the Miller Street Triangle parking garage from 65 to 45 feet, and decreasing open space requirements around specific new buildings from 30 to 20 percent - excluding the great lawn on Punchbowl Street. Work is being done with the City Department of Planning and Permitting which recommended the change in the height limit to protect the mauka view plains of Punchbowl. The Plan Review Use relates to the Honolulu Medical Group building which will become the medical center's Physicians Office Building III. Plans for the Lauhala Street garage include adding additional floors of parking much of which will essentially be below grade level due to the steepness of the street.

Questions, answers and comments followed:

1. Acquisition of adjoining land for expansion has been unsuccessfully attempted for two decades.

2. The Plan Review Use does not create exemptions from the Punchbowl Special District requirements.
3. Opposition was expressed to the request for a reduction in open space requirements, and it was noted that the great lawn along Punchbowl Street will not be affected.
4. The medical library will be relocated, the site used for a new parking garage.
5. The improvements include development of more private rooms for patients.

White moved and Mollring seconded that the Board supports the proposals. Discussion followed on: a) need for better services, b) suggestion for shuttle service around the medical center grounds for patients, c) long distance from Beretania Street bus stops to the medical center grounds, d) height limit changes will not affect the helicopter landing facility, e) an elevated pedestrian walkway connecting the Miller Street Triangle parking garage to an adjoining building may be developed. **The motion carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS:

CLUB PAUHI, EFFORTS TO CLEAN UP THE AREA, NAME CHANGE, SERVE MEALS – No representative was present. Chair Matusow noted an item on today's Liquor Commission meeting agenda relates to the revocation of the liquor license. It was noted there are ongoing problems with Club Pauahi and that the building has been sold to a new owner. It was unknown what happened at the Liquor Commission meeting earlier today.

COMPLAINT AGAINST NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD – Smyth distributed copies of the investigative subcommittee report to the Neighborhood Commission on the complaint. Smyth reported a second complaint has been filed with a June 21 deadline for response. **Smyth moved and Rhoads seconded that the investigative subcommittee of four members draft and submit a response to the second complaint. The Board members on the investigative subcommittee are Smyth, Matusow, Rhoads and White. The motion carried, 8-1.** Middleton opposed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR JUNE 2006 – MAY 2007 TERM – Chair Matusow relinquished the chair to Vice Chair Smyth.

CHAIR - Matusow nominated Smyth for Chair. There were no other nominations. **Smyth was elected Chair by a 8-0-1 vote. Smyth abstained.** [Middleton abstained.]

VICE CHAIR - Mollring nominated Matusow for Vice Chair. Au nominated Brawley. A vote was held with the following results: for Matusow – Rhoads, White, Matusow, Smyth, Mollring; for Brawley – Au, Brawley, Middleton, Yuen. **Matusow was elected Vice Chair by a 5-4 vote.**

SECRETARY – Matusow nominated Rhoads. Middleton nominated Brawley. Brawley declined the nomination. There were no other nominations. **Rhoads was elected by an 8-1 vote.** Middleton opposed.

TREASURER – Rhoads nominated Mollring. Middleton nominated Brawley. Brawley declined the nomination. Mollring was elected by a 8-1 vote. Middleton opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2006 REGULAR MEETING: Rhoads moved and Matusow seconded to approve the minutes. **The motion carried unanimously.**

White left the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CHAIR'S REPORT: Vice Chair Matusow reported the following:

STREET CLOSURES – No report.

LIQUOR LICENSES – a) Events International, Special General License, site of former Kaponi's, Aloha Tower Marketplace, Monday - July 3, Friday – July 14, all 5:00 p.m. to midnight, b) Events International, Special General License, site of former Kaponi's, July 3, July 7, July 12, July 14, all 5:00 p.m. to midnight, c) Murphy's Bar and Grill, application to close Merchant Street, between Nuuanu Avenue and Bethel Street, for First Friday events, beginning July 7, 6:00 – 11:00 p.m., d) Waterfront Venues, 1 Aloha Tower Drive, for Restaurant General License.

OTHER EVENTS – a) Kakaako Community Development District, Mauka Area Plan and Rules, June 13, Kakaako Room, Ward Warehouse, 6:30 p.m., b) Honolulu Elderly Affairs Division of City Department of Community Services, forum on Redirecting Aging in the 21st Century, June 30, State Capitol Auditorium, 7:45 a.m.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

REDUCING EMERGENCY VEHICLE SIREN NOISE – Discussion followed where Middleton opposed having this item on the agenda, threatened getting a court injunction to prevent it from being discussed, Rhoads suggested it be removed from the agenda, and Chair Smyth indicated this item will be kept on the agenda.

CHARTER COMMISSION, PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY CHARTER – Chair Smyth reported that all items relating to the Neighborhood Commission and Neighborhood Boards did not advance and will not be on the General Election ballot, and that if desired, the Board could discuss other proposed amendments that did advance.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mollring reported for the month of May, the Operating Account balance was \$1083.33, the Publicity Account balance was a negative \$157.35, and the Refreshment Account balance was \$62.76. Chair Smyth noted that additional refreshments were purchased for tonight's meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION: No report.

STATE AFFAIRS – Chair Smyth reported the Governor has until June 11 to sign bills, veto bills, or allow them to become law without being signed. Also, the Governor has been holding bill signing ceremonies at locations impacted by the new laws.

CITY AFFAIRS – Matusow reported the Board should monitor the planning for the next City's Electric Light Parade for Christmas, with special attention to traffic management plans.

OAHU METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION – White left earlier in the meeting. He had no report.

PUBLIC SAFETY – No report.

WEED AND SEED – Mollring reported there will be a local National Night Out Against Crime event in August where the Citizens Patrol will walk the neighborhood with members of the Nuuanu Merchant's Association and the State Attorney General's Office.

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL INVESTIGATION – Matusow reported there will be a public meeting, June 26, Mission Memorial Auditorium, City Hall Annex, 5:30 p.m. Board members on the Transportation Special Investigation Committee may attend on behalf of the Board.

MAYOR'S CHINATOWN SUMMIT – Matusow reported the summit is scheduled for June 22, Hawaii Theatre. Board members Matusow, White, Smyth, and Rhoads will attend on behalf of the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 6, Pauahi Recreation Center, 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dean Chu
Neighborhood Assistant